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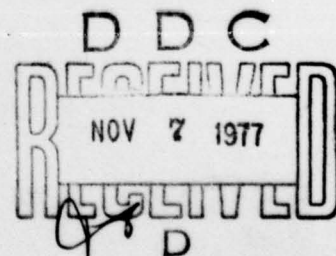
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by

S. Stanescu



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TELEPATHY IN RELATION WITH SCIENCE

by

Dr. Sorin Stanescu

The term telepathy ~~has~~ long ago entered our daily language. It usually means/possibility of "transmitting" or "receiving" from a distance another person's thoughts.

There is no doubt that telepathy, as a phenomenon and preoccupation is no longer something new. It has a history, and even a "prehistory", if we can say so. The empirical idea is that there are people able to feel from a distance somebody's presence, emotions, and even thoughts. But can thoughts really be transmitted? Are there indeed such "unknown senses" which could explain some strange and rare manifestations of the human psychic, of the brain?

In fact, for immemorial time the idea has persisted that it is possible to transmit and receive thoughts, the belief that certain people possess a mysterious and rare power of being informed by others - from a distance - about certain - usually important- events occurring at the very moment when they are "recepted".

Later, toward the end of the ^{XIX}~~XIX~~th century, this phenomenon was named "telepathy". The word comes from the Greek "tele" (- far) and "pathos" (- feeling), and it means capability of feeling from a distance. The term was placed in circulation by the English researcher ^{W.H.}~~W.H.~~ Myers, when science first tried to study this phenomenon, and he was founded in London (in 1882) the renowned "Society for Psychic Researches". Shortly before that, a few researchers had started studying such abnormal psychic phenomena. Most distinguished among these researchers were Carpenter, Thomas Huxley, etc. The basic method used at the onset by this Society was the "investigative method", the inventory, with conclusive proof, of various "spontaneous" (involuntary) telepathic phenomena.

On this occasion, telepathy started to be gradually defined. The English researcher Podmore, for instance, defined it as a "cerebral vibration starting in a person's brain (emitting agent) and transmitted to another person's brain (percipient)".

Frederic W.H. Myers, who coined the word "telepathy", assumes that this would mean the "acting of a spirit upon another, outside the usual sensory organs".

The first results obtained through the investigative methods used by the Society for Psychic Researches are gathered in an impressive collection, the volume "Phantasms of the Living", by Gurney, Podmore and Myers. But neither

data, nor definitions ~~do~~ ^csucceed in defining the telepathic phenomenon in a satisfactory manner. Of great value were the minute studies undertaken by the famous French physiologist Dr. Richet, from the Faculty of Medicine in Paris, Nobel prize laureate, discoverer of the "anaphylaxy"; he gathered his observations in a monography, "Treatise of Metapsychology" (Paris, 1926).

Richet establishes the basic principles in the study of abnormal psychic phenomena that will be later, toward our time, be named "parapsychology". He includes telepathy within the sphere of a still unknown faculty of grasping by unusual means information from a distance. He calls this capacity cryptosthesia, and is convinced that it is a matter of a so-called "sixth sense". Richet was among the first to apply the theory of probability in telepathic experiments he studied, and he noticed the fact (which he considered of crucial importance) that this theory supports the idea of telepathic phenomena. Moreover, it is established that out of 17653 experiments (done only in England), 4760 correct transmissions were obtained, exceeding thus by 347 the probable number.

Along the years, telepathic phenomena were wrapped under various denominations. Later though, they were all considered by parapsychology under the shortened term E.S.P. (extrasensory perception). It is worth noticing though the fact that study of paranormal psychic phenomena has actually always aroused very little interest among scientists. Fear of being compromised, skepticism "ab initio", and lack of information deprived parapsychology of the very necessary contribution which could be brought only by laboratory specialists. On the other hand, this skepticism is understandable. The grounds of telepathy had to be cleared of false practices, (coincidences, superstitions, naiveties, pure quackeries of various "sooth-sayers", magicians or music-hall fakirs) which were misleading people.

Adversaries of telepathy advocated its rejection by most often~~y~~ invoking the theory of chances, sustaining that usually a remarkably equal number of failures and successes are obtained. Among researchers who rejected the idea of telepathy on the basis of such arguments was Nicolae Vaschide, a known psychiatrist of Romanian origin. He published in Paris, at the turn of the century, a study entitled "Experimental findings with respect to the phenomenon of telepathy". In his work, he rejects telepathy on the basis of experimental data. Together with another ~~reknown~~ ^{ed} psychologist, prof. Henri Piéron, he observed that, out of 1343 cases of "thought transmission" between two persons, success was obtained only in 48 cases, and even then it was (according to the authors) a matter of mere coincidence. It is evident though that this kind of "telepathy", evaluated in this somewhat simplistic manner, does not exist.

The truth is that we cannot transmit our thoughts in a simple manner, exactly as we would speak, because this is not possible. What is considered as possible is the transmission of strong emotional states felt by an individual.

Dr. Joseph Banks Rhine from Duke University (North Carolina) has an extremely important role in bringing telepathy up-to-date. He achieved not less than 90,000 experiments between 1935 and 1938, with an unaccounted number of students volunteers. The experiments were usually done using the transmission, according to a standard code, of a number of cards with geometrical drawings (square, cross, star, two undulant lines, circle, etc.), named Zener's cards. The experiments are done only with "sensitive", "pre-disposed" subjects, strictly selected beforehand. One student was, for instance, submitted to 11,250 tests, and he always gave nine correct determinations for each series of 25.

Another valuable contribution in defining and demonstrating telepathic experiments was made by the Soviet scientist Leontin Vasiliev (Leningrad), who denominated telepathy "an ideatory suggestion at a distance". "Evidently" - said Vasiliev - "not thoughts are transmitted, this would be absurd, but information (bioinformation) about thoughts". Vasiliev clarified the problem of how the telepathic messages are transmitted. Before him it was believed that telepathy is caused by radio waves, electromagnetic waves, emitted by the brain. Vasiliev accomplished a series of experiments and demonstrated that a "receptive" subject, even if isolated in a metal shielded room, type Faraday cage, succeeds nonetheless to receive "telepathic waves". It thus became clear that these were not electromagnetic waves.

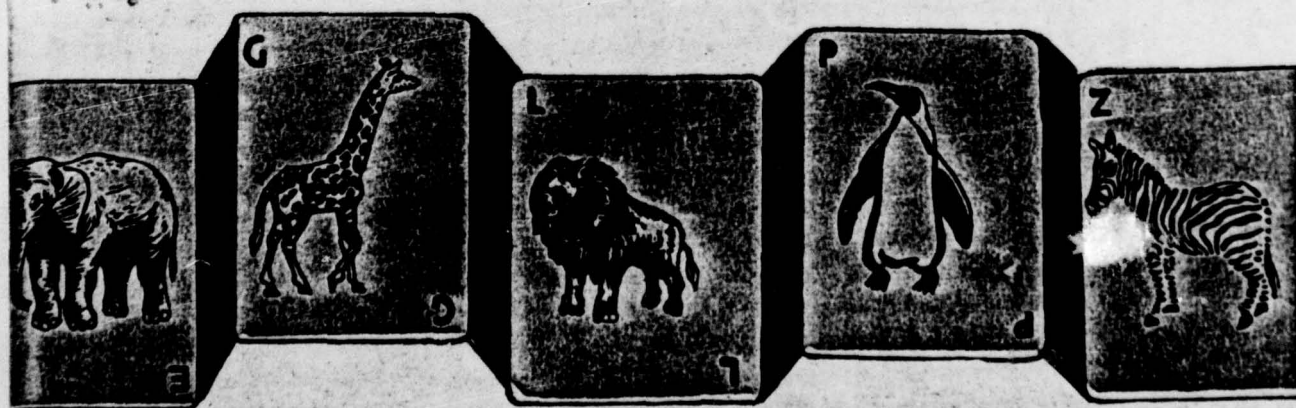
We ought to point out that such a screening demonstration had been made back in 1940-1942 by the Romanian physicist Emil Giurgea (1886-1960), at the Laboratory for Parapsychology (Rosu, near Bucharest).

It is known that radio waves do not pass through water. This ^{is} the reason why, for instance, atomic submarines cannot be controlled from the base, unless they surface. But when surfacing they become dangerously exposed. For this reason, it was tried in U.S. ^(in 1955) to accomplish control by telepathy, between the atomic submarine "Nautilus" and the military base Friendship (Maryland). The experiment consisted of a "telepathic dialog" between two trained subjects ^{ec} (one on ground, the other on the submarine). It is said that the experiments ^{me} were successful in 75% of cases. But from the military point of view this percentage is still highly risky - this is probably why the "Nautilus"

experiment was leaked out ^{to} the press... Notwithstanding, Rand Corporation carries on intense study of "psionics", and the Soviet scientist Guliaev, studies the "phenomenon psi" and the way "telepathemes" are transmitted...

Obvious demonstrations regarding viability of telepathy are also represented by the laboratory experiments called "Pratt-Woodruff" and, respectively, "Peace-Pratt" experiments. Of no lesser interest are experiments done by Ochorowitz, Warcollier, the American scientist S.G. Soal, those done by prof. dr. W. ^H.C. Tenhaeff from the Dept. of Parapsychology of the University of Utrecht (Holland), etc. But if telepathic waves (admitting they exist) are not electromagnetic, then what are they? A famous German physicist, Gordan, advances the seductive theory that "telepathic waves" would be one and the same thing as "gravitational waves". But, since it is not known as yet what gravitational waves are, we find ourselves still at a standstill in the understanding of this phenomenon.

Many researchers today agree in the idea that telepathy acts through the unconscious, and they consider the telepathic faculty to be something atavic, vestigial, a bioinformation modality currently observed on the zoologic scale, and which was lost in most humans. Other researchers - a lesser number of them - believe that this faculty will - under another more advanced form - eventually be a faculty of the far away future. But, be it as it may, either the expression of a "significative coincidence" or of a "synchronisation" originating in the inmost depth of the "archetypal" unconscious, as C.G. Jung used to believe, or "the glancing of the third eye", telepathy still remains a fascinating enigma that science is called upon to solve.



Pictures named Zener's cards used by Professor Joseph Banks Rhine of Duke University (North Carolina) in 90,000 experiments demonstrating telepathy.

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